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# The Art Union

PUBLISHED MONTHLY.

THE OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF THE AMERICAN ART UNION.

Correspondence on Art matters is respectfully solicited.

Notices of all forthcoming Exhibitions and Art Sales throughout the country are desired, as well as copies of the Catalogues of Public and Private galleries and transient Exhibitions, and reports of Art Sales.

All communications relating to the Literary Department of this journal should be addressed to CHARLES M. KURTZ, No. 51 West Tenth Street, New York.

All communications relating to the Business Management of the Journal, or having reference to advertising in the Journal or Catalogues of The Art Union, should be addressed to "Business Department, American Art Union," No. 51 West Tenth Street, New York.

For terms of subscription to THE ART UNION, and rates for advertising in the same, see the "Business Department" of this Journal.

VOL. I.

NEW YORK, JUNE-JULY, 1884.

No. 6-7.

## EDITORIAL.

IT has been deemed advisable to issue an enlarged number of THE ART UNION to take the place of the two single numbers which otherwise would have been issued for June and July. This will enable us to nearly regain the month that was lost through the inefficiency of the printers employed when this publication was begun,—and it is felt that this will be a great advantage. By issuing one number for August and September, in the same manner, it is believed that we will be enabled to bring out the journal a few days before the beginning of the month of issue thereafter. The publication of this enlarged number enables us to print a larger number of long articles than we could find space for in two separate single numbers;—articles that could not be published in parts to advantage.

HOW frequently we hear some artist remark: "Well my picture was returned to me by the Hanging Committee! It was'n't good enough for the Academy, it seems, though it was good enough for the *French Salon* a year ago!" And this is intended to convey to us the idea that the work has been approved by a much higher authority than the Academy jury, and that the latter body does not know much about Art or the picture would not have been rejected.

With a great deal of pride, young men often mention the fact that they have exhibited in the *Salon*. They seem to think that the *Salon* numbers affixed to pictures ought to be accepted as certificates of merit without question. For is not the *Salon* exhibition the greatest art exhibition of the year, the world over? Sometimes it is amusing, sometimes disgusting and sometimes pitiful to hear the ideas expressed of the *Salon*. The fact is, it is easier to exhibit a poor

picture there than in any other public exhibition of the kind, and while it is true that the best pictures of the year, all things considered, are usually shown in the *Salon*, it is also true that some of the very worst daubs find place there. The *Salon*, like a great city, is a place of extremes. There is to be found the greatest opulence on the one hand, and the greatest poverty on the other. And if we take the average of it all, what will we have? An *average* certainly no higher than that in our own National Academy exhibitions. We have seen *Salon* pictures and pictures on the walls of the Royal Academy that no American Hanging Committee—except possibly a picked committee from the Society of American Artists—would think of hanging at all. It is not such a stupendous honor to have a picture in a *Salon* exhibition, under the circumstances, and what follows shows that the "glory" is still more questionable.

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Our readers have doubtless read in numerous daily papers, the reasons certain young Parisian-Americans have given that they received no medals this year. It was not that their pictures were lacking in merit; oh certainly not! it was because the wretched American Congress insisted upon retaining the duty upon foreign works of art imported into this country,—despite Minister Morton's assurances to the Frenchmen that the Art tariff would be removed this year; and this withholding of the prizes was a bit of Gallic retaliation.

Though this does not seem remarkably modest as coming from certain of these young men, we take it for what it may be worth, and compare it with the saying of a certain Frenchman, quoted in the *Herald*, to the effect that it is doubtless true that the Americans were given no honors this year on account of the tariff business, and that doubtless they will be shut out of certain schools next year if the present tariff is not amended. Then, in his indignation, the man loses his discretion enough to say that the French artists have always made it a point to treat American exhibitors well, because they knew the value of the American market for their own productions and naturally wanted to keep on the right side of the Americans.

So this, then, explains the French system of awarding medals, does it? Taking it in connection with what the young Parisian-Americans have told the *Herald* reporter, it would seem so. This, then, is the French idea of casting bread upon the waters that it may return to them after many days?

We do not believe it. We believe the young Parisian-Americans referred to are doing our French brethren injustice, and we believe the Frenchman who talked with the *Herald* reporter also did his countrymen injustice. The French people have too much good sense to withhold medals, or the privilege of exhibiting, from those who are worthy, even if they lacked in fairness or even generosity,—which we think they do not. Besides, why should they visit what they might regard the sins of our government upon the heads of young men who have not only

sought to have the tariff entirely removed, but have even practically become Parisians? No, the Frenchmen are not so stupid as some of their friends give them credit for being, and while the present *ad valorem* duty seems to be objectionable to almost everyone, still, if it is not changed even before another year, American students will still study in the *Beaux Arts*, American artists will still exhibit in the *Salon*, and when they paint well enough to satisfy the jury, will continue to receive medals.

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Not long ago the writer had a conversation with one of the most extreme of the art-free-traders, and admitted freely that if this country would adopt free-trade in everything else as well, there could be no possible objection to free trade in art; but with free trade *in art alone* there would be manifest injustice done to the American artist, because nearly all the materials he uses in the production of a picture would still be heavily taxed—while foreign pictures, containing like materials, would be admitted free—and, moreover, all the necessities of life still being taxed in America, the American artist could not live equally well for nearly so little money as the foreign artist, and therefore could not compete with him on nearly equal terms.

"Oh well," said the art-free-trader, "if the American artist can live so much cheaper and produce pictures at so much less expense by living in Europe, *why don't he go to Europe to live?*"

Why not indeed!—That is about the extent of the interest the average art-free-trader seems to feel in the development and future of American Art.

A clipping from one of our exchanges characterizes THE ART UNION as an advocate of a retention of the present tariff on foreign works of Art. Our friend is mistaken. THE ART UNION advocates neither a duty nor free trade, and no editorial can be pointed to which will disprove our assertion. We have published many communications from artists advocating a *specific* instead of either an *ad valorem* duty or no duty at all, and the majority of the artists seem to consider the specific duty the proper solution of this vexed question. We have asked for arguments in favor of free trade in Art, but none have been forthcoming, and in all the communications and editorials upon the subject in any of the daily papers, we have yet to find the first grain of common sense. We have read sensible articles from the other side.

DURING the months of July, August, September and October, all communications or articles intended for the columns of the THE ART UNION should be sent to Charles M. Kurtz, Director of the Art Department, Southern Exposition, Louisville, Ky. Drawings for illustrations and all advertising favors should be sent to the Art Union office, No 51 West Tenth Street, New York.

Any subscriber of THE ART UNION who changes his post-office address during the Summer months, may have his journal follow him if he will kindly keep us advised of his changes of address. In all cases both the old and the new address should be sent. It must be remembered that THE ART UNION'S business office has been changed to 51 West Tenth Street, where all communications should be addressed henceforth.

#### ART UNION MATTERS.

DURING the past two months, the ART UNION has occupied its new office at No. 51 West Tenth street. There being no Art Union Exhibition now open, there is little to chronicle. In a few days, about one hundred and twenty-five paintings, by members of the Art Union, will be shipped to Louisville, Ky., for the Southern Exposition, and shortly thereafter some fifty pictures will be sent to St. Louis, for the Exposition in that city. Some of the most popular paintings from this year's National Academy exhibition will go to Louisville, and a number of pictures have been painted especially for this Exposition. Every artist contributing is represented at his best, and when it is known that almost every prominent artist in the country is numbered among the contributors, the quality of the collection may be appreciated. Some account of the Southern Exposition and its Art Department will be given in a future number of the ART UNION.

#### NEW MEMBERS.

The following new members of the American Art Union have been elected since our last issue, and have duly qualified:

Carl Weber, Philadelphia; W. H. Snyder, Brooklyn, and Otto H. Bacher, Cleveland.

#### THE CHARM OF THE ROSE.

THERE is probably no inanimate object in the world more beautiful than a delicately tinted Rose. There is certainly nothing else which combines such beauty of form and color with such exquisite delicacy of texture and such delicious perfume. I can think of nothing to equal a half open flower of La France. I choose La France because of its perfume, of its color. The perfume is certainly unequaled; powerful, yet never heavy, it seems the very breath of summer. Then look into the rose's heart! Was ever such glowing rosey rose seen elsewhere? Like the perfume, it is powerful yet always tender and delicate. As we look into the flower's cup we see it all aglow with this brilliant, tender, vibrating red, but the outer part where the petals turn back is of a milky whiteness, a satiny smoothness. The inner petals are small and ranged around the cup, the outer ones are long and somewhat irregular, making a very attractive shape.

While every one acknowledges the beauty of the Rose, and recognizes its color and its perfume, very few indeed know truly why it is so charming. The charm seems to me to lie, in great part, in the fine silky texture of the petals and in their translucency. No other flowers have these in such marked degree, and it is these qualities which make the contrast between the cool, clear rim and outside of the cup, and its glowing heart. The other charm is that which is most felt when we look down into the depths of the half open bud. It is the charm which it shares with every beautiful thing which is "hidden yet half revealed."

GEO. C. LAMBDIN.